TL 1342

In-Session Resolution submitted by the Portuguese Centre
Supported by the Centres of Galicia, Brasil, Holland, Phillippines and Australia.

"The Assembly of Delegates of International P.E.N. meeting in Santiago de Compostela in September 1993, at the 60th International Congress:

Recalling that Indonesia invaded a neighbouring country (East Timor) at the time under Portuguese administration, on the grounds of Timor having ceased to exert de facto, its sovereignty;

Noting that Indonesia has despised the desired and legitimate right to self-determination by the people of East Timor;

Recalling furthermore that, in consequence of the mentioned invasion, Indonesia has harmed the Human Rights of the people of East Timor, namely,

1. prohibiting the use of the nearly 30 dialects and the two languages common to all population (the Tetun dialect and the Portuguese language, this one used for writing, the others being of oral expression);

2. prohibiting the teaching of Portuguese at the official schools (although it is still being taught at diocesan schools, the catholic priests are persecuted);

3. forbidding free access to mass media except to advocate the presence of the occupying force;

4. scattering communities by imposing forced population migrations to far away villages, thus causing the disappearance of many native dialects;

5. persecuting religious beliefs: the East Timor people follow both Catholicism and Animism (its ancient religion), worshipping in the surrounding Nature representations of God: trees, stones, water streams, etc., invested with sacred powers strongly linked to the cult of ancestors, which the catholic priests have since long learned to respect;

6. interdicting free association, thus preventing the people from practicing their sacred rituals, on the pretext of being contrary to Progress;

7. under the same pretext, forcing the native people to alter ancient habits, such as using a shell or a bark spoon to eat, as has always been done, and to adopt the Indonesian way of eating with bare hands;

Appalled by the genocide that is being inflicted upon the people of East Timor, namely the Dili massacre perpetrated by Indonesian forces against defenseless civilians in Dili graveyard during mass services;

Shocked by the treatment inflicted upon the poet Xanana Gusmão, heroic leader of the resistance movement against the Indonesian invader, who:

1. was arrested by the Indonesian Police on 20 November 1992 and irregularly brought to trial in Jakarta, disregarding the recognition by International Law of his Portuguese citizenship;

2. was then, in a mock-trial, sentenced to death, having, by this undignified act, raised international solidarity (this penalty has been recently and ironically commuted by President Suharto to a 20 years imprisonment sentence);

Sharing the indignation of international organizations such as the International Federation of Human Rights, the European Parliament, the European Community and the United Nations Human Rights Commission;

Recalls that the poet Alexandre (Xanana) Gusmão is not only the symbol of an independent Timor but also an example of the of minorities rights to their cultures, their languages, their religions, their free expression and their participation in the international community - ideals of peace, mutual comprehension, freedom and cultural development, contemplated in the P.E.N. Charter;

Calls on the Indonesian authorities to uphold the above rights of the East Timor people as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Calls on the government of Indonesia requesting that the sentence against Xanana Gusmão be dropped, since it represents an attack on International Law."